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## HIBERNATION OF REPTILES IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.

Of the snakes in the immediate vicinity of Los Angeles, very few are to be found at large during the winter, for they behave much as do their eastern cousins. This was contrary to my expectations when I first arrived here, for like many another easterner, I thought Southern California would yield a bountiful harvest of snakes at any time of the year. Now and then a Pacific Bull Snake (*Pituophis catenifer*), a Western Garter Snake (*Thamnophis parietalis*), or a "Water" Snake (*Thamnophis hammondi*) will wander in search of food and may be found abroad even in winter. Only exceptionally warm days will cause this, however, and few, if any, other snakes ever come out in the winter. Most captives in my collection of local snakes refuse food from about the middle of October to the beginning of March.

Lizards, on the contrary, are to be found on any sunny day during the winter when they come forth to warm themselves after a freezing night. At such times they snap up occasional flies and other insects. *Gerrhonotus scincicauda*, *Uta stansburiana* and *Sceloporus bi-seriatus* are the most intrepid of the lizards that dare the rigors of a none-too-gentle climate and warm themselves in the rays of the winter sun. Up in the mountains where snow falls during the winter, one may see the hardy little swifts (*Uta*) scamper about rocks in the sun a few feet away from shady nooks where large patches of snow lie evaporating, while down at a lower altitude may be found other lizards, and even snakes at times. In captivity the lizards feed readily through the winter.

The hiding places of lizards may easily be found in the winter by overturning heaps of boards, stones, logs, etc. At that time of the year, especially after a heavy frost, they are easily captured, for they are quite sluggish. The Horned Lizards usually bury themselves in the ground, where they are sometimes

dug out accidentally. Snakes in this part of the country hibernate under haystacks, piles of boards, etc., but usually they seem to pass the winter in gopher and ground squirrel holes in the ground.

Between last Christmas and New Years I caught one "Water" Snake and one Western Garter Snake on a particularly warm day in a valley between the city of Los Angeles and the ocean. Near Dulzura I caught one more "Water" Snake and this winter received two small unidentified snakes from Calexico, where there is an arid tropical climate. Even in the desert around Calexico, snakes are more scarce in winter than they are in summer; though, if the truth must be told, they are not plentiful there at any time.

I have not known of any case of *Clemmys marmorata*—Southern California's only turtle—being found in the winter.

PAUL D. R. RÜTHLING,  
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### COLUMBUS ON THE REMORA.

In the Journals of the first and second voyages of Columbus are found respectively descriptions of a species of Trunk and Sucking-fish observed near Cuba. The account of the latter mentions that the "Reversus," or Remora, was employed by the Indians in a singular manner of fishing which consisted in holding the "hunter-fish" fast by a cord, and allowing it to attach itself to the bodies of other fish or large marine turtles. Humboldt conjectured the "Reversus" to be identical with *Echeneis naucrates*, Poey with the species named by him *E. guaicano*. Pre-Linnean writers on ichthyology continued to apply the term "Reversus" to the species of Sucking-fish described by Columbus, and also included under the same term a spinous variety, or "species," which is easily recognizable from the descriptions and figures as *Diodon histrix*. The use of the Remora as a "hunter-fish" in the manner first related by Colum-